COMMUNITY VISION + ACTION GUIDE
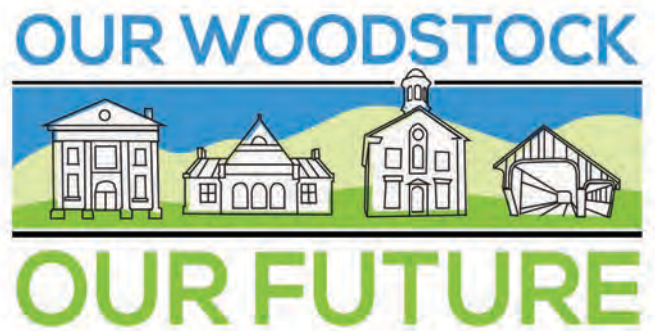
OUR WOODSTOCK
OUR FUTURE

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OURWOODSTOCKVT.ORG

Visit the project website for links, photos, survey results + more.

COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

In 2019, the Town and Village of Woodstock, Vermont launched a bold process: **Our Woodstock, Our Future**. The community planning and visioning process was designed to bring Woodstock community members together to explore what they want for the future of the community and how to get there.

Led by a local steering committee, the process was designed to build on past community planning and visioning conversations and the many projects and organizations already moving Woodstock forward. At the same time, Our Woodstock, Our Future was designed to bring new voices to the table and identify a shared vision and priorities.

Our Process
- Community members shared more than 3,000 hopes, wishes, needs, and action ideas to make Woodstock stronger.
- From those ideas, we identified one shared vision and eight major community values or themes, along with existing efforts.
- The Steering Committee and community members organized and prioritized ideas and developed ideas for specific projects.
- We identified overarching action priorities that support multiple themes, or will build the community capacity to implement the vision overall.

ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

This document is not a master plan or a scientific study. It is a resource and guide for the many groups and leaders who will help Woodstock move forward.

Use the Vision to: Guide overall direction and investments for the town, groups and organizations; improve alignment of efforts and policies

Use the Actions to: Understand community needs and priorities; inspire and prompt thinking about potential activities

Woodstock will be a welcoming and creative community that balances the best of small town living and world-class opportunities for all. We commit to sustaining our unique character and quality of life – now and tomorrow.

OUR WOODSTOCK OUR FUTURE

COMMUNITY VISION

We envision a:

Community for All

We will value and nurture all who wish to live, work, play, shop and learn here.

We will offer a year-round home and destination for diverse people. We will provide high quality, affordable housing, jobs, services and activities. We will encourage new leadership, ideas, and volunteerism.

Healthy Environment

We will protect the health of our natural and built environment.

We will enhance our historic character and small town feel, our rural beauty and natural resources. We will build a stronger and more resilient Woodstock, use resources responsibly, and address our changing climate.

Thriving Local Economy

We will grow a diverse local economy around our unique village and community assets.

We will support our local businesses and entre-preneurs, create good jobs with livable wages, and protect our iconic village. We will provide diverse offerings for residents, visitors, and nearby towns.
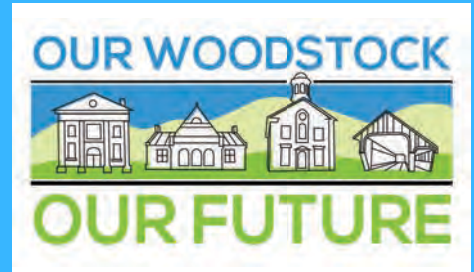
To achieve this vision, we will value and work toward:

Activity & Creativity There are diverse arts and cultural events, shopping and restaurants, recreation and opportunities to strengthen our minds and bodies.

Affordability & Accessibility We offer housing, food, recreation, transportation, childcare and shopping options to fit all budgets and needs.

Diversity & Friendliness We are a diverse community. All ages, income levels, abilities, races and ethnicities, genders and sexualities are welcomed, included, and have equitable opportunities.

Leadership & Volunteerism We have a culture of leadership and volunteerism, transparency and collaboration. We have a strong local government, civic organizations and grassroots efforts.

Local Businesses & Entrepreneurship We support our local businesses and they offer good jobs. Businesses offer diverse services for residents, visitors, and surrounding towns.

Natural Resources & Landscapes We work together for clean and healthy land, water, air, plants and wildlife, and access to open space. We take action to reduce our impact on the climate and natural resources.

Small Town Character We treasure our history, traditions, and iconic landmarks. We maintain a safe, quiet community with a beautiful and walkable village center.

Strong Institutions & Services We offer quality schools, healthcare facilities, social services, libraries and cultural facilities. We have good roads, utilities and transportation options.

ACTION PRIORITIES

Community members shared thousands of individual ideas for activities, projects and actions. There are endless other ways to make Woodstock's vision real, and many players engaged in doing so. Rather than weighting one group's priorities over another or deciding certain themes are more important than others, we share two sets of overarching priorities that we believe can maximize progress toward our whole vision at once.

CALL TO ACTION: OVERARCHING PRIORITIES

We call on all community members, groups, boards and committees to advance these priorities in your own lives and work, and to work together to make bigger investments and progress.

SYSTEMS + CAPACITY

We believe that Woodstock most needs a commitment to this vision, and investment in the culture and capacity to collaborate on implementation. If we can collectively commit to the vision, build capacity for implementation, and focus on collaborating, then we believe Woodstock can scale up its impact and progress.

HIGH IMPACT ACTIONS

When we organized ideas by the eight major vision themes, a clear set of priority activities and strategies emerged. They weren't necessarily the most popular action ideas, but they impact theme after theme after theme. These ideas have "co-benefits" -- they might have one primary purpose, but also improve numerous other desired outcomes and community values. If we align our actions and invest in these action areas, we can create positive impacts for many people and issues at the same time.

SYSTEMS + CAPACITY

Investments and actions in these three areas will lay the groundwork for more efficient, inclusive, transparent and collaborative progress.

COMMITMENT

Adopt the Vision

We encourage all Woodstock organizations, boards, committees, businesses and leaders to officially adopt and embrace this community vision. Any group or leader can use this vision to guide their work, programs and decisions.

CAPACITY

Build Civic Infrastructure

Civic infrastructure means the systems, connections, and structures that allow people to work together and solve problems. Strategic investments include capacity (such as a community coordinator), stronger communication channels, and access to information.

COLLABORATION

Empower Action

Big change requires new thinking, new partnerships, and new methods. Leaders and community members can support quick, efficient progress by creating unusual partnerships, supporting experimentation (including potential failure), and empowering others.

HIGH IMPACT ACTIONS

These six action areas each positively impact most vision themes. Investments in these areas (small or large, municipal or private) can have exponential benefits.

Price Control

Preserving affordable homes, retail/commercial space, and land is a long-term investment in people and places.

Communications

Centralized, improved communications will help people access the resources and programs that already exist.

Walk/Bike Routes

When it's safe and easy to walk and bike, people can also socialize, shop, volunteer, exercise, work, and reduce energy use.

Welcome Programs

Welcome info, programs and friendly faces quickly get visitors and new residents oriented and engaged.

Resident Benefits

Year-round residents need affordable goods + services that meet their needs -- or discounts to make things affordable.

Community Activities

More (free) community activities, events, and traditions offer social, economic, health, environmental and other benefits.

VISION THEMES + ACTION IDEAS

In addition to the overarching priorities that can help advance the vision overall, there are many ideas worth exploring and many additional details to the community's vision for the future. In the following section, we share detailed briefs for each vision theme, which can serve as resources for groups working on these areas.

RESOURCE: VISION BRIEFS

Before you read and use these briefs, it's helpful to know what you'll find and how to interpret them. For more information on our process and methods, see Methods + Activities.

OVERARCHING PRIORITIES

As for the vision overall, we share overarching needs and focus areas that can advance, support or improve most other details or potential actions.

BIG CHANGE + QUICK ACTIONS

In our final Vision to Action Forum, breakout groups reviewed all the action ideas by theme and identified top ideas for big change and quick actions. These tangible projects are the best thinking of participants -- not community consensus.

DESIRED OUTCOMES

Visions are broad and aspirational. Desired outcomes describe what the vision means to people, and what it will look like in Woodstock once realized. We drafted the desired outcomes after grouping and reframing the hopes people shared.

ACTION AREAS, IDEAS + WISHES

People shared comments and hopes ranging from specific personal wishes to innovative ideas for change. We synthesized major action areas that could move Woodstock toward each desired outcome, which represent community priorities. We share a sample of personal wishes to provide inspiration and spark new ideas.

ACTIVITY + CREATIVITY

Woodstock has diverse arts and cultural events, shopping and restaurants, recreation and opportunities to strengthen our minds and bodies.

OVERARCHING PRIORITIES

AFFORDABILITY

Free passes, resident discounts, reduced cost and other options to make programs affordable to all community members

INFORMATION

Community calendar, digital Town Crier, centralized listings and improved communication about existing offerings

DIVERSITY

Multi-cultural and multi-generational activities; diverse offerings for varied ages, abilities and interests; venues and activities in all seasons, neighborhoods, times of day

BIG CHANGE

Youth Offerings

Develop programs and offerings serving youth, such as a skate park

Bar + Brewery

Open a bar/brewery (in the East End) offering nightlife, gathering space and an evening music venue

Little Theater

Renovate and upgrade the Little Theater for more flexible uses and users

QUICK ACTIONS

Community Picnic

Commit to making the community picnic an annual tradition again

Storytelling Events

Organize moth-style community storytelling events

Calendar Coordinator

Hire or find a volunteer to coordinate a central community calendar

ACTIVITY + CREATIVITY

VISION + ACTION

OUTCOMES	ACTION AREAS	IDEAS + WISHES
FESTIVALS + EVENTS Woodstock offers diverse seasonal festivals and events, stewarding new and old community traditions.	1. Adding + diversifying arts + cultural events 2. Diversifying + improving arts + cultural venues	• big music festival • storytelling events • singer-songwriter showcase • theater on the Green • more venues for music and nightlife
PARKS, TRAILS + REC Residents and visitors can access free public parks, trails and a variety of outdoor + indoor rec opportunities for all ages and interests.	1. Improving parks + trails 2. Adding new park + trail types, locations, 3. Developing community gardens 4. Supporting + allowing rec businesses	• bike pump track • skateboard park • boating at the Pogue • batting cage • mini golf • bowling alley • mountain bike trails
ARTS + ACTIVITY PROGRAMS Residents and visitors have affordable access to a rich menu of activities, arts and cultural programming.	1. Increasing offerings for at-risk and underserved groups 2. Creating free and informal meet-ups 3. Offering multi-generational learning	• exercise meet-ups • game night + evening programs • programming for young adults • more free library passes to attractions
SHOPPING + DINING Woodstock offers a diversity of shopping, dining and entertainment experiences throughout the day, week and seasons.	1. Adjusting policies to allow for food trucks, street vendors + flexible food offerings 2. Recruiting international + multi-cultural food vendors	• food trucks • international food truck festival • nightlife • dance club • pool hall • brewery + wine tasting
GATHERING PLACES People have access to affordable and free social gathering spaces outside of the home and workplace.	1. Develop more co-working and flexible event spaces 2. Encourage shared use of businesses, restaurants + facilities (off hours)	• youth gathering places • high-tech and design co-working hubs • outdoor seating and gathering places • community "living room"
SPIRITUALITY + RELIGION Places of worship and diverse spiritual communities are celebrated and supported.	1. Organize spiritual (but not religious) meet-ups and groups 2. Create "sacred spaces" and gathering places	• exercise meet-ups • game night + evening programs • programming for young adults • more free library passes to attractions

AFFORDABILITY + ACCESSIBILITY

Woodstock offers housing, food, recreation, transportation, childcare and shopping options to fit all budgets and needs.

OVERARCHING PRIORITIES

VARIATION

Flexible, affordable and varied options for housing, business and commercial spaces, transportation, parking, dining and shopping

INCLUSION

Offerings that appeal to and meet the needs of underrepresented groups including youth, BIPOC, young adults, people with lower incomes, and people with special needs

LOCALIZATION

Affordable goods, services, discount programs and offerings designed specifically for local residents; local control and preservation of affordable spaces

BIG CHANGE

Housing Density

Use a variety of methods (zoning, conversion, purchase, development, HomeShare programs) to increase density and housing options

Food Access

Explore creative food access programs like Prescription CSAs; create an affordable grocery co-op or food store

Rethink Retail

Prioritize the preservation and creation of affordable, flexible village retail/commercial spaces and businesses serving local residents

QUICK ACTIONS

Activity Scholarships

Create a scholarship fund or pool resources for youth participation in extra-curricular and after school activities

Counseling Access

Help connect people to existing mental health services, programs, benefits

Freebie Events

Host more events like clothing swaps or "free markets" to get unwanted items to people who need them

AFFORDABILITY + ACCESSIBILITY   VISION + ACTION

OUTCOMES	ACTION AREAS	IDEAS + WISHES
HOUSING All who choose to live in Woodstock can find affordable, flexible housing options.	1. Price control of existing affordable housing stock 2. Allow for flexible housing types + models 3. Create new affordable + diverse housing 4. Reduce ownership cost	• downsizing/home share options for seniors • tiny house village • workforce housing options (seasonal, young adults) • energy-efficient options • more village housing
BASIC NEEDS Residents can afford basic needs in town (affordable childcare, groceries, clothing, medical care, utilities, etc.) and can find the items they need regularly.	1. Expansion of childcare centers + options 2. Expansion of after school/vacation care 3. Offer free programs + services 4. Expand retail options for necessities (clothes, food) 5. Expand free village wifi	• full-service affordable grocery store • affordable stores selling clothing, toys, household goods • more slots + options for childcare • resident discounts
ENTERTAINMENT People can find entertainment, shopping and dining options for all tastes, backgrounds and budgets.	1. Attract more varied restaurants + shops 2. Offer discounts for residents 3. Offer small flexible business spaces + models 4. Expand free activities + entertainment	• Woodstock resident shopping day or discount cards • pop-up or shared restaurant spaces • street vendors + food trucks • varied restaurants (Mexican, Chinese, kid-friendly, burgers + beer)
BUSINESS SPACES Businesses, creatives and start-ups can find diverse options for retail and commercial spaces at reasonable rents.	1. Price control of village retail/commercial spaces 2. Develop pop-up, temporary + shared space options 3. Create community entrepreneurship/maker facilities	• community commercial kitchen • shared space agreements in shops, restaurants • tiny shop village or group retail shops • community trust for village commercial
MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION People have access to affordable and convenient multi-modal transportation options.	1. Improve walk/bike options + safety 2. Develop ridesharing programs 3. Improve local + regional transit options 4. Increase village parking + affordability	• bike lanes to Taftsville, High School, West Woodstock, East End • resident parking passes or lots • family-friendly bike trail • village shuttle • Uber or Lyft

DIVERSITY + FRIENDLINESS

Woodstock is a diverse community. All ages, income levels, abilities, races and ethnicities, genders and sexualities are welcomed, included, and have equitable opportunities.

OVERARCHING PRIORITIES

VARIATION

Flexible, affordable and varied options to meet the needs of diverse people: activities, housing, business and commercial spaces, transportation, parking, dining and shopping

CONNECTION

Multi-generational, multi-cultural and other social/community programs that help people know each other, feel welcome, and build empathy

EQUITY

Systems, conversations, capacity and dedicated efforts to identify and address barriers to diversity, equity and inclusion

BIG CHANGE

Diversity, Equity + Inclusion Committee

Launch a town diversity, equity and inclusion committee (with a coordinator) to identify, prioritize and act on issues of equity and inclusion

International Food Trucks

Create events and/or policies that support offering a variety of international cuisines, to quickly diversify food offerings

Community Conversations

Host a series of facilitated community conversations on issues of race and class, discirmination and acceptance

QUICK ACTIONS

Human Library

Host a "human library" event allowing people to meet, listen to, and learn from others with different experiences

Welcome Wagon

Launch a "welcome wagon" or other program to welcome new residents

Activities for All

Host free game nights, storytelling events, or skill swap programs that allow different groups to connect

DIVERSITY + FRIENDLINESS

VISION + ACTION

OUTCOMES	ACTION AREAS	IDEAS + WISHES
DEMOGRAPHICS Woodstock has a growing population with more people choosing to stay here or move to town year-round from different racial, age, cultural and economic backgrounds.	1. Target marketing + recruitment for young families and diverse residents 2. Expand childcare and housing options for all ages 3. Offer networking opportunities	• promotional video of Woodstock for potential residents • workforce housing • more young families, BIPOC residents, middle-income families and young professionals
EQUITY + INCLUSION Woodstock intentionally creates dialogue and takes action to address racism and discrimination and ensure that people of all races, genders, sexualities, classes and abilities are welcomed.	1. Offer community dialogue on diversity, equity and inclusion 2. Create town diversity, equity + inclusion (DEI) committee 3. Recruit and support diverse community leaders from all backgrounds 4. Improve police-community relations	• town and school policies on DEI • leadership programs for BIPOC, youth + lower income people • mentorship programs for new residents and youth • people feel safe, seen and heard
CULTURAL OFFERINGS Cultural and social events include representation and celebration of diverse groups.	1. Diversify existing cultural and community programs 2. Develop and expand programs featuring other races + groups 3. Expand free and low-cost programs and activities	• international food truck festival • new ethnic food restaurants • multi-generational activities • safe spaces
NEIGHBORLINESS Neighbors know, welcome and help each other and connect across divides (age, race, class, politics, full-time and part-time residents),	1. Create welcoming program for new residents 2. Organize social events + activities by block or neighborhood 3. Hold events that encourage social mixing and listening	• welcome wagon • new neighbor buddy program • community storytelling events • more friendliness in businesses + village • service sector is welcomed and valued
AFFORDABILITY Access to affordable and free social and recreational opportunities, services and amenities allows more middle- and low-income families to live in Woodstock.	1. Expand multi-generational offerings and programs 2. Offer free and reduced cost access to amenities 3. Provide and publicize aging in place services 4. Expand public recreation and gathering places	• people can buy affordable, everyday goods in town • workforce can afford to live in Woodstock • shared housing options for workers

LEADERSHIP + VOLUNTEERISM

Woodstock has a culture of leadership and volunteerism, transparency and collaboration. We have a strong local government, civic organizations and grassroots efforts.

OVERARCHING PRIORITIES

CULTURE

Training, support and capacity to create a culture of transparency, civility, engagement, service, and collaboration

SYSTEMS

Systems, policies, communication channels, platforms and structures to support more engaged and effective service

INCLUSION

Direct invitations to participate and serve; varied and accessible means of participation to accommodate diverse people

BIG CHANGE

Community Coordinator

Create a paid position to coordinate information sharing, collaboration and engagement among town groups, non-profits, leaders and the public

Digital Town Crier

Make the Town Crier available digitally (or a centralized community calendar), and available for postings 24/7

Remote Access

Offer platforms, recordings, and social media livestreaming and chats to encourage remote participation in board and committee meetings and digital access to info

QUICK ACTIONS

Town Meeting Engagement

Increase town meeting attendance by offering childcare, inviting people and sharing why it matters

Volunteer Postings

Create a central place to regularly post volunteer opportunities in the community

Non-Profit Network

Revive the non-profit network in order to help non-profits and organizations work together and coordinate

LEADERSHIP + VOLUNTEERISM   VISION + ACTION

OUTCOMES	ACTION AREAS	IDEAS + WISHES
ENGAGEMENT Residents feel welcome and heard and actively engage in municipal government and decision-making.	1. Invite new residents and part-time residents to engage 2. Expand voter registration and information campaigns 3. Create multiple channels and ways for people to share input	• get-out-the-vote campaign • new resident welcome program • digital engagement and meeting platforms
CIVIC SYSTEMS Woodstock has a strong culture and systems of transparency, civility, accountability and trust between the community and leaders.	1. Create conflict resolution proceses and capacity 2. Train community leaders in equity and inclusion, transparency, engagement 3. Create opportunities for community conversations and dialogue 4. Increase municipal transparency and ease of accessing information	• community ombudsperson • police-community relations campaign • mediation policies • facilitation and ethics training for board members
COLLABORATION Organizations collaborate and communicate effectively.	1. Create organized systems for collaboration between businesses, gov, and non-profits 2. Create a paid community coordinator position 3. Improve + diversify municipal communication channels	• community coordinator • more bulletin boards and info posted in places where people go
VOLUNTEERS Woodstock can recruit, coordinate and train a large pool of volunteers.	1. Invite new residents and second home owners to volunteer and engage 2. Expand youth volunteer programs 3. Create joint training programs among non-profits	• volun-tourism programs • rewards or discounts for volunteers • neighbors helping neighbors program
LEADERSHIP Woodstock welcomes and recruits new leaders and new ideas.	1. Create participatory budgeting opportunities 2. Develop youth leadership and civic engagement programs 3. Host community dialogues on town issues	• dialogue program like NH Listens • explore having a mayor • participatory budgeting for EDC funding • young leaders in government program

LOCAL BUSINESS + ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Woodstock supports its local businesses and they offer good jobs. Businesses offer diverse services for residents, visitors, and surrounding towns

OVERARCHING PRIORITIES

LIVABILITY

Affordable workforce housing, childcare, transportation, recreation and great schools to build a workforce and encourage visitors to spend time

PROMOTION

Activities, communication channels and marketing campaigns to promote Woodstock and its offerings to visitors, residents, and potential residents

VARIATION

Diversified local economy with a wide variety of businesses, products, services, hours of operation, costs and jobs to meet the needs of diverse people

BIG CHANGE

Wireless Woodstock

Boost reliability and range of wireless Woodstock to offer consistent, free wireless service throughout village and enable more remote working

East End Events

Plan more activities and events in and around East End Park to increase vitality of the East End and draw more visitors

Music Festival

Organize a major (annual) music festival in Woodstock, to drive visibility and attract new and younger visitors

QUICK ACTIONS

Welcome Tours

Develop welcome tours of Woodstock to welcome, inform, and engage new residents and visitors around everything Woodstock offers

Welcome Info

Post visitor info at the shed on the Green and have volunteer "welcomers" circulate in the village to assist and welcome people

Expand Events

Continue annual community picnic and expand Taste of Woodstock to two days

LOCAL BUSINESS + ENTREPRENEURSHIP VISION + ACTION

OUTCOMES	ACTION AREAS	IDEAS + WISHES
VILLAGE SHOPS Woodstock has a thriving village center and storefronts filled with diverse businesses.	1. Preserve affordable village retail/commercial spaces 2. Renovate, reuse historic buildings 3. Offer low-risk spaces and models for micro business, start-ups and entrepreneurs 4. Create incentives to attract new businesses	• street vendors and food truck area • "Tech Alley" • innovation center • Community Trust expand to retail/commercial
AFFORDABLE GOODS Both locals and visitors can find affordable products, activities and services in town.	1. Create a discount program for year-round residents or employees of big employers 2. Allow food trucks, pop-ups and low-cost business spaces to attract affordable vendors	• practical, affordable products • re-open family diner • place for locals to buy affordable, everyday things like clothes, shoes and gifts
OUTDOOR ECONOMY Woodstock has a strong outdoor recreation and sustainable tourist economy that protects and enhances the environment.	1. Expand and improve trails and river access 2. Create bike paths or safe bike routes between village areas and key destinations 3. Increase river access for a variety of uses 4. Create campaign to promote sustainable visitor behavior	• "volun-tourism" opportunities • boating on the Pogue • boat ramps • outdoor gear library for residents • no more dog waste
CREATIVE ECONOMY Woodstock enjoys a robust creative economy that supports artists, farmers, food and beverage producers and makers.	1. Expand free local creative and cultural programming 2. Create system to connect farmers and producers to restaurants + businesses 3. Create makerspace or affordable shared studio space for creatives	• farm-to-restaurant network • affordable artist and entrepreneur rentals • VT Restaurant Week featuring Woodstock
JOBS Residents have access to good, flexible local job options with livable wages.	1. Expand broadband and telecommunications infrastructure 2. Create incentives for businesses 3. Offer flexible and shared spaces for remote workers 4. Increase networking events	• local jobs board • incentives for employers to create jobs • better free wifi • "Tech Alley"

NATURAL RESOURCES + LANDSCAPES

Woodstock works together for clean and healthy land, water, air, plants and wildlife, and access to open space. We take action to reduce our impact on the climate and natural resources.

OVERARCHING PRIORITIES

LIVABILITY

Affordable workforce housing, childcare, transportation, recreation and great schools to build a workforce and encourage visitors to spend time

PROMOTION

Activities, communication channels and marketing campaigns to promote Woodstock and its offerings to visitors, residents, and potential residents

VARIATION

Diversified local economy with a wide variety of businesses, products, services, hours of operation, costs and jobs to meet the needs of diverse people

BIG CHANGE

Net Zero Buildings + Community Solar

Make all municipal buildings "net zero," for energy use; explore solar panels for all suitable buildings and develop community solar projects

Food Hub

Create a food hub to expand and support local foods, connect producers and consumers, and increase access to healthy, local food

Community Composting

Develop a community composting program to facilitate composting by residents, businesses and visitors

QUICK ACTIONS

Climate Resolution

Pass a community climate resolution to declare a climate emergency and commit to action

Dog Waste Bags

Provide convenient dog waste bags and receptacles in all public spaces to reduce waste problems

Trail Signage

Improve signage and info to better publicize existing trails and help people use them responsibly

NATURAL RESOURCES + ENIRONMENT VISION + ACTION

OUTCOMES	ACTION AREAS	IDEAS + WISHES
ENVIRONMENT Woodstock's natural environment (water, air, soil, biodiversity) is healthy, connected and clean.	1. Make Woodstock a CSZ -- Certified Sustainability Zone 2. Strengthen policies on stormwater, waste water, air pollution 3. Create incentives for low-impact development 4. Reduce dog waste	• CSZ • dog waste policy • dog park
CLIMATE CHANGE Woodstock takes action to reduce emissions and energy use and adapt to climate change.	1. Support energy committee in coordinating action 2. Pass a climate resolution and develop climate action policies 3. Offer clean energy alternatives for residents 4. Expand bike/ped and multi-modal transportation networks 5. Convert municipal buildings to solar and make net zero	• cohesive walk-bike network throughout Woodstock (or Bridgewater to Taftsville) • e-vehicle charging stations • community solar array • bike share program
WORKING LANDS Woodstock values and supports thriving working farms and rural landscapes.	1. Create systems to help farmers connect to markets 2. Offer local food discounts or incentives for residents 3. Recruit and support young and beginning farmers 4. Work to control cost of prime farm and forest land	• local food hub • farm apprentice program • trust model for farmland or community farm • prescription CSA
CONSERVATION ETHIC Woodstock strengthens its tradition of conservation ethics and sound resource management and makes sustainable choices easy.	1. Expand educational programming around renewable energy and natural resources 2. Adopt policies to reduce use of plastic 3. Improve recycling and composting	• plastic-free town • community/business composting program • energy efficiency ordinances for buildings
OUTDOOR RECREATION Residents have access to and shared stewardship of local trails, parks, rivers and green space.	1. Expand and connect trail and walk/bike networks 2. Develop new river access points and boat ramp 3. Create trails in areas without many 4. Offer free trail and park access for residents	• river loop trail • cohesive walk-bike network throughout Woodstock (or Bridgewater to Taftsville) • free resident passes to Mt. Tom ski trails

SMALL TOWN CHARACTER

Woodstock treasures its history, traditions, and iconic landmarks. We maintain a safe, quiet community with a beautiful and walkable village center.

OVERARCHING PRIORITIES

STORYTELLING

Signage, histories, public art, events and activities to highlight and celebrate the unique histories and stories of Woodstock's people and land

COMMUNITY

Public spaces and gathering places, events, walkable streets, and activities and traditions that help people meet, socialize, build relationships and feel connected to the town

BEAUTY

Adaptation, preservation and restoration of historic buildings and sites; protection of working and scenic landscapes and compact village center

BIG CHANGE

History Art & Signage

Create public art, wayfinding and interpretive signage highlighting a variety of cultural, historical and natural assets in Woodstock

Indigenous History

Develop and highlight an indigenous people's history, telling the story of the area before colonial settlement

Walk/Bike Trail

Create a family-oriented walk/bike trail throughout Woodstock to encourage activity and safe exploration of Woodstock

QUICK ACTIONS

Dog Park

Develop a dog park to allow dog owners a safe, dedicated space to connect and let dogs run off leash

Skate Park

Create a skate park in the East End or at Vail Field to fill a critical gap in recreation offerings for youth

Story Circles

Host story circle events where community members can informally share their stories -- and Woodstock's

SMALL TOWN CHARACTER

VISION + ACTION

OUTCOMES	ACTION AREAS	IDEAS + WISHES
COMPACT VILLAGE Woodstock village is vibrant, compact and walkable.	1. Develop a streetscape plan and consistent fixtures 2. Develop a wayfinding system and consistent signage 3. Incorporate public art into the village center	• control village traffic noise + trucks • lower traffic speeds • sidewalks, walk and bike paths • more murals and public art
TRADITIONAL ARCHITECTURE Traditional, historic buildings, streetscape forms and development patterns are intact and maintained.	1. Expand education and outreach on the history of village and buildings 2. Re-invent and re-use space in historic buildings 3. Explore zoning and policies to protect traditional building and development forms	• architectural walks • building history signs • form-based code • fund for historic building maintenance
WORKING LANDS Working farm and forestland and agricultural enterprises remain active, economically viable and intact.	1. Develop programs and supports for young farmers 2. Develop a food hub or local food network to increase farm viability and food enterprises 3. Develop shared commercial kitchen and food prep space	• local food hub • farm apprentice program • shared pop-up restaurant space • farmer-consumer network
SCENIC LANDMARKS Scenic and cultural landscapes, viewsheds and landmarks are protected.	1. Create an asset map of scenic resources 2. Develop policies to protect historic and rural scenic resources	• visual preference survey • map of scenic areas
TRADITIONS Woodstock offers seasonal festivals and events with diverse appeal, stewarding a culture of community traditions (old and new).	1. Create a continuity plan for cherished annual events and traditions 2. Engage diverse residents in starting new, multi-cultural and multi-generational events and traditions	• continue community picnic and photo, Book stock, Wassail Weekend and Taste of Woodstock, • international food events
LIVABLE COMMUNITY Woodstock remains a year-round community where working families can find affordable housing, goods and services.	1. Promote community to attract more year-round residents 2. Preserve and develop affordable housing stock, good jobs, spaces and services 3. Engage seasonal residents in community	• more young, working families • volunteer programs to engage second home owners and seasonal residents

STRONG INSTITUTIONS + SERVICES

We offer quality schools, healthcare facilities, social services, libraries and cultural facilities. We have good roads, utilities + transportation options.

OVERARCHING PRIORITIES

COMMUNICATIONS

Stronger, centralized communication channels (digital + analog) and systems for sharing information

COLLABORATION

Interaction, regular communications, and structured collaborations between schools, government, and service providers

RESILIENCE

Convenings and programs to allow people and groups to learn skills and solutions from each other and reduce dependency

BIG CHANGE

Accessible Websites

Improve accessibility, appeal, and content on town websites to increase access to information

Community Calendar

Shared community calendar and information hub to centralize community info and make it easier to access

Resilience Hub

Create a resilience hub space that allows people to meet and work together on grassroots resilience efforts

QUICK ACTIONS

Service Convening

Convene service organizations to learn from churches about how to better serve and welcome people

School-Town Coordination

Share newsletters, info, and invite two-way interaction between schools and town government

Skill-Sharing Event

Free peer learning or skill sharing events like Bethel University, to boost community skills

STRONG INSTITUTIONS + SERVICES VISION + ACTION

OUTCOMES	ACTION AREAS	IDEAS + WISHES
CULTURAL FACILITIES Woodstock offers a first-class library and cultural institutions with strong facilities, spaces, programs + services.	1. Upgrade and maintain existing facilities 2. Expand free and discounted programming	• restore Little Theater • free library passes to more attractions • outdoor performance spaces
EDUCATION Residents have access to excellent public schools, early education and childcare programs, and adult learning programs.	1. Expand preschool and childcare programming, slots and facilities 2. Complete long-term school, early ed strategic planning 3. Offer free peer learning and skill sharing programs	• nature preschool • more free playgroups and meet-ups • childcare for Town Meeting and board meetings
MENTORSHIP Working youth have access to mentorship programs and workforce training.	1. Create and expand youth mentorship and entrepreneurship programs 2. Engage retired and seasonal residents in mentorship 3. Create apprenticeships in creative, outdoor and working lands sectors	• new business grants or incentive programs for youth entrepreneurs
TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS Safe, multi-modal transportation options are available to everyone.	1. Create a multi-modal transportation master plan 2. Expand free transit and shuttle options 3. Create walk/bike safety campaigns and demos	• visual preference survey • map of scenic areas
COMMUNICATIONS Everyone has access to high speed/broadband Internet , reliable phone service, and strong communications channels	1. Support rapid expansion of EC Fiber 2. Improve reliability and range of Wireless Woodstock 3. Create central communication channels with coordination capacity	• map cell + broadband dead areas • outdoor workspaces near village wifi hubs • shared community calendar • more remote meetings
HEALTH + WELLNESS Affordable health and wellness services, healthy food, and physical activity options are readily available in town.	1. Integrate health and wellness programs into schools and public services 2. Increase free access to exercise programs and facilities 3. Make healthy, local food more affordable	• more accessible mental health services • community gardens and edible landscaping

PROCESS OVERVIEW

In 2019, the Town and Village of Woodstock, Vermont launched a bold process: Our Woodstock, Our Future. The community planning and visioning process was designed to bring Woodstock community members together to explore what they want for the future of the community and how to get there. Led by a local steering committee, the process was designed to build on past community planning and visioning conversations and the many projects and organizations already moving Woodstock forward. At the same time, Our Woodstock, Our Future was designed to bring new voices to the table and identify a shared vision and priorities. The result? The community vision on the previous page, priority strategies for eight vision themes, and hundreds of additional action ideas.

GOALS

At the outset of the project, the Steering Committee identified the following goals.

Process goals

- Achieve broad, diverse participation
- Communicate clearly and openly with the community
- Recognize and build on assets and existing efforts
- Make decisions, prioritize projects, and move to action

Community goals

- Build new relationships and common ground
- Increase community participation (long term)
- Increase Woodstock's vibrancy (long term)

PROJECT TEAM

Community visioning and engagement takes many hands and many partners. Community leaders formed a volunteer Steering Committee for the project and engaged a consultant to facilitate the process.

Steering Committee

- Ana DiNatale
- Alita Paine Wilson
- Andy McLaughlin
- Beth Finlayson
- Deanna Jones
- Geraldine Fowler
- Jen Falvey
- Kelly Sczomak
- Kimberly Gilbert
- Michael Caduto
- Sally Miller
- Sarah Kaminski
- Sebastian Mitre
- Susan Boston
- Tayo Kirchhof

Consultant

Community Workshop LLC is a Vermont-based consulting firm specializing in community planning and engagement. Team members included Rebecca Sanborn Stone (Principal) and Claire Tebbs.
communityworkshopllc.com

Funder

The project was funded by the Woodstock Economic Development Commission (EDC), which was formed in 2015 to support economic and community development.
townofwoodstock.org/economic-development-commission

PARTNERS

The Steering Committee is grateful to our core planning partners, who supported this project by providing time, spaces, resources and staff.

Core Partners

- Billings Farm & Museum
- Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historic Park
- Norman Williams Public Library
- North Chapel
- Optimist
- Ottauquechee Health Foundation
- Pentangle Arts
- Sustainable Woodstock
- Town + Village of Woodstock, VT
- Two Rivers-Ottauquechee Regional Commission
- Woodstock Chamber of Commerce

The Steering Committee also thanks the many organizations, volunteers and businesses who helped to publicize, host materials, and spread the word.

- Angkor Wat
- The Laundry Room
- Market on the Green
- Maplefields
- Melaza Bistro
- Mon Vert
- Mountain Creamery
- Pizza Chef
- Safford Commons
- Soulfully Good Cafe
- Thompson Senior Center
- The Vermont Standard
- Woodstock Farmers' Market
- Woodstock Home & Hardware
- Woodstock Inn & Resort
- Woodstock Public Safety
- Woodstock Rec. Dept.
- Woodstock Terrace
- Worthy Burger
- Yankee Bookshop
- Zack's Place

METHODS + ACTIVITIES

The community visioning process was a 9-month exercise in gathering, distilling, drilling down, synthesizing, reflecting, and iterating. We started the process by first casting the broadest net possible -- reaching as many community members as we could and collecting as many ideas as we could. We then spent hours organizing ideas and identifying themes and areas of common ground. The final vision and action ideas truly reflect the words and wishes of the community. It's not the vision of any one person or group, but we hope that everyone who participated will recognize something of their personal hopes in the final vision and many actions that will improve their experience of Woodstock.

PROCESS

2018

Initial community visioning conversations

Spring 2019

Steering Committee formed; project planning

Summer 2019

Public engagement activities + events; input analysis; vision drafting

Fall 2019

Vision revision + endorsement; action identification

Mar 2019

Planning workshop with community leaders

May 2019

Kickoff Event at Billings Farm & Museum

Sep 2019

Community Picnic and vision reveal at Billings Farm & Museum

Dec 2019

Vision to Action Forum at Norman Williams Public Library

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT + EVENTS

From the beginning, we aimed to engage and gather hopes and ideas from as many Woodstock community members as possible -- defined as broadly as possible. We wanted to hear from and engage full-time and part-time residents, youth and seniors, business owners and workers, visitors and newcomers. That meant offering a wide variety of times, ways and opportunities to participate. Here's a snapshot of how we did that.

FORUMS, DISCUSSIONS + EVENTS

**KICKOFF EVENT
May 29, Billings Farm**

Open house, digital polling, presentation, and talks by community leaders to share what's happening in Woodstock and launch the project

FESTIVALS + EVENTS May-Aug, 2019

Steering Committee members set up tables and gathered input from attendees at more than a dozen community events, activities and festivals, including:

- Trek to Taste
- Alumni Day
- Market on the Green
- 4th of July
- ParkRun
- Bookstock
- Concerts
- Playgroups
- Workshops

**MEETING-IN-A-BOX CONVERSATIONS
Summer, 2019**

Steering Committee members + volunteers led vision discussions at the Library and with various groups + committees

**STORY CIRCLE
July, 2019**

Thompson Senior Center + Community Workshop hosted a multi-generational story circle about memories and hopes for Woodstock

**SPEED NEIGHBORING + CONVERSATION
July, 2019**

Optimist + Community Workshop hosted a "speed neighboring" social event and vision discussion, with new and long-time residents

**POP-UP BOOTHS
July-Aug, 2019**

Steering Committee members + volunteers set up pop-up parklets in the village to engage passersby and gather vision input

**VISION REVEAL
Sep 9, Billings Farm**

Poster session and dot voting to share and gather input on draft vision + action ideas, at the revival of the community picnic

**VISION-TO-ACTION FORUM
Dec 9, Billings Farm**

Interactive workshop to share the final vision, review overarching priorities, and develop action ideas and projects for vision themes

SURVEYS + POLLING

DIGITAL+ ONLINE SURVEY
May - Aug   results: ourwoodstockvt.org/survey

We released an in-depth survey asking how people interact with Woodstock, what they love, what they wish, and what their priories are. Full results (590 responses) and a detailed analysis are available online as a resource to leaders wanting to better understand the community's needs and vision.

EVENT POLLING

We used digital (handheld keypad) polling at the Kickoff and Action Forum to gauge audience priorities and approval of the vision.
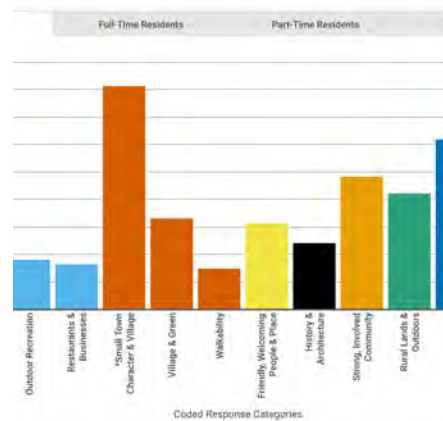
QUICK INPUT

POSTCARDS, STICKERS + COASTERS
APRIL - AUG

We printed custom postcards, stickers and drink coasters with our two main vision questions and collected more than 2,000 responses. More than 30 restaurants, bars, businesses, facilities and organizations handed out postcards and put posters on tables. We placed stickers in downtown shop windows so people could read and share their ideas while passing by.

POSTERS

DRAFT VISION REVIEW
SEP- OCT

We used large-format posters to share the draft vision and gather input at the Community Picnic + Vision Reveal event and for a week at Norman Williams Public Library. The posters gave a project overview shared the draft vision and asked whether people agreed. Others shared details and asked for action ideas on each theme. People wrote comments and used sticky dots to vote on each.
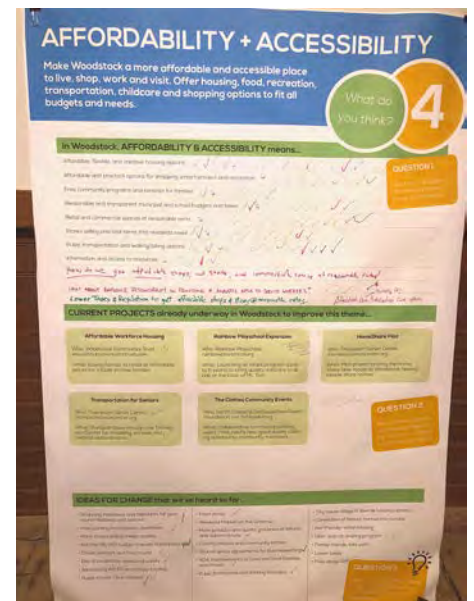
FROM 3,000 COMMENTS TO 1 VISION

Gathering input and ideas from thousands of community members was the first challenge. Distilling those ideas into a single, shared vision was the second. Community Workshop led the Steering Committee and volunteers through a process to read, organize, interpret and synthesize every comment. Here's a snapshot of how it worked.

ORGANIZATION

Our first step was to gather every single comment, recording, email, survey response, postcard, sticker and drawing and organize them through photos, spreadsheets and files.

Next, we created a team of community readers including the Steering Committee and volunteers. We organized the comments and input into packets, so that each reader saw different types of input, and so that every comment was read by at least two people. Readers used recording sheets to organize the comments into a list of unique visions, wishes, strategies and action ideas.

THEMING

At a workshop in August at Marsh-BIllings-Rockefeller National Park, the readers came together to turn the individual comments into a vision.

They wrote each unique vision idea on a sticky note, and then began clustering ideas. Eventually, participants began to identify and name clear clusters -- beautiful village, affordability for residents, or diverse activities.

They kept combining and shuffling, and eventually identified a core set of themes that comprised the community's vision.

VISION DRAFTING + REVIEW

Community Workshop drafted the vision text from the themes and ideas developed at the workshop. The Steering Committee made initial revisions, and then the community weighed in on the draft through event posters, meetings and online review. The vast majority of commenters supported the draft vision as written, but we revised the vision to incorporate changes in emphasis and wording based on what we heard. We then organized the action ideas and specific details under each theme and created a final version.

EXISTING EFFORTS

PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES UNDERWAY TO SUPPORT THE VISION

Many programs, activities and actions are already happening or in development in Woodstock, supporting the community vision themes. This is not a comprehensive list, but does represent many of the activities we heard about through this process. Key impacts represent the vision themes most strongly impacted by each activity.

- Activity + Creativity
- Diversity + Friendliness
- Local Business + Entrepreneurship
- Small Town Character
- Affordability + Accessibility
- Leadership + Volunteerism
- Natural Resources + Landscapes
- Strong Institutions + Services

ACTIVITY		ENTITY	KEY IMPACTS
Homeownership Program	Preserving affordable primary workforce housing stock	Woodstock Community Trust	🔒 🏪 👥
Learning Lab	Lifelong education program with courses taught by the community	Woodstock Learning Lab	☑ 👥 🔒
Gen2Gen Summer Camps	Annual week of free, intergenerational summer camp	Thompson Senior Center	☑ 👥 🔒
Community Picnic and Photo	Annual community picnic and photo tradition at Billings Farm	Multiple	👥 🏛
Rainbow Playschool	Expansion of playschool to accommodate more children	Rainbow Playschool	🔒 🔧 🏪
Music By the River	Free outdoor summer concert series, open to all	Pentangle Arts + North Chapel	☑ 🔒
Village Revitalization	Variety of projects to improve aesthetics, walkability + vitality	Woodstock Chamber of Commerce	🏪 🏛 🔧
Change the World Kids	Teen leadership, volunteerism and community service program	Pentangle Arts + North Chapel	✋ 🌿 🔒
Energy Committee	Committee promoting energy efficiency and renewables	Sustainable Woodstock	🌿 🔧 🔒

EXISTING EFFORTS, CONT.

ACTIVITY		ENTITY	KEY IMPACTS
Sustainability Zone Certif.	Certified sustainability zone certification and process	Sustainable Woodstock	🌱 ✋
Nonprofit Network	Network to help area leaders partner and collaborate	Multiple	✋ 🔧 🔒
Strengthening Families Program	Free activities, support and resources for families and children	North Universalist Chapel	🔒 👥 🔧
Mental Health School Support	Support to schools for providing mental health services	Ottauquechee Health Foundation	🔒 🔧
Good Neighbor Health Grants	Small grants to help people pay for specific health services	Ottauquechee Health Foundation	🔒 🔧
HomeShare Pilot	Pilot program to test homesharing housing model	Thompson Senior Center	🔒 👥
Senior Transportation	Free or low-cost shuttles and door-to-door rides	Thompson Senior Center	🔒 🔧
Stay to Stay Weekend	Weekend visit program to attract long-term residents	Woodstock Chamber of Commerce	👥 🏪
Green Drinks	Monthly networking and social event for environmental fields	Sustainable Woodstock	🌱 📅 ✋
TH Theater Upgrades	Renovations and building upgrades to improve Town Hall Theater	Pentangle Arts	📅 🔧 🏛
East End Park	Park space offering rec, health, and environmental benefits	Sustainable Woodstock	🌱 🔒 🏛
School Strategic Plan	New plan for advancing middle + high schools	Woodstock Union Middle + High Schools	🔧 👥 🏪
EC Fiber Extensions	Extending fiberoptic Internet service for businesses + households	EC Fiber	🔧 🏪 🔒
ParkRun	Free weekly 5km timed run with social meet-ups	Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller NHP	📅 🔒

EXISTING EFFORTS, CONT.

ACTIVITY		ENTITY	KEY IMPACTS
Aging at Home Support	Health, wellness and other services to help seniors remain in homes	Thompson Senior Center	🔒 👥 🔧
Clothing Giveaway Events	"Free the Clothes" used clothing distributions for families	North Universalist Chapel	🔒 👥
Birth to 5 Playgroup	Free weekly playgroup for young children and caregivers	North Universalist Chapel	📅 👥
River Loop Trail	New walking trail through downtown, along river	Sustainable Woodstock	🌱 🔒 🏛
Scotland House Day Program	Adult day services and social opportunities	The Scotland House	📅 👥 🔧
Community Gardens	Garden plots for community members at Billings + King Farms	Sustainable Woodstock	🌱 🔒
Community Grants	Grant funding for community and economic development work	Economic Devel. Commission	✋ 🏪 🏛
Rec Programs + Camps	Low-cost summer camps, fitness classes, lessons and activities	Woodstock Recreation Center	📅 🔧 🔒

DOCUMENTS + RESOURCES

FROM THE PLANNING PROCESS

PROCESS DOCUMENTS

Additional documents, resources and data are available from the planning process and stored on the project website **ourwoodstockvt.org**

Photos	Event and activity photos and images of community input
Survey	In-depth community vision survey report, based on 590 responses

Plans	Reports, plans and documents from past and current planning processes
Events	Overview of past project events and outcomes

GUIDES + RESOURCES

Many guides and resources are available to help communities plan projects, engage the community and coordinate action. The resources below align with Woodstock's community vision and priorities.

Leadership	Vermont Community Leadership Guide + Network from VCRD **vtrural.org/leadership**
DIY Projects	How-tos and examples of simple, quick projects from Community Workshop + AARP **diycommunitycookbook.com**
Public Spaces	Library of public space guides, resources, data, example projects + images from PPS **pps.org/publications**

Livability	Free guides, toolkits, issue briefs + free publications in AARP Livability Library **aarp.org/livable-communities**
Complete Streets	Guides to complete streets + active transportation design and implementation from ATA **atpolicy.org/design-guides**
Equity	Racial equity, allyship and action guides and data from VT Racial Equity Advisory **racialequity.vermot.gov**

VISION SCORECARD

FOR PROJECT + POLICY EVALUATION

Use the community vision scorecard on the reverse to ensure that programs, policies, proposals and decisions have the best possible impact on Woodstock's community vision.
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INSTRUCTIONS

Identify an idea

Identify a **specific** project, idea, concept or alternative that you want to evaluate. If you're contrasting options, use one scorecard for each. Write the idea at the top.

Score the vision impact

Evaluate the impact of the idea on each theme from Woodstock's community vision. Refer to the vision for details. It may be hard to score, or a close call -- do your best.

Note impacts

Note particularly positive or negative impacts of the idea on each vision theme.

Add it up + find ways to improve

Add up the total score and use it to consider next steps. See where the idea scored low and high. Then use the scorecard to consider:

- how to change the idea to improve the overall score
- how to boost the impacts for themes that scored lowest
- which option or alternative positively impacts the most themes
- which option or alternative scores highest

TIPS + OPTIONS

Compare over time

Complete this exercise annually or over certain time periods for a major program and see how results change

Compare with others

Ask team or group members to each do the exercise, and then discuss where you disagree
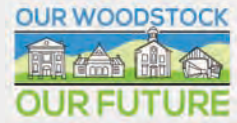
Work together

Complete the exercise as a group and discuss each item, coming to agreement on impacts

Keep going

Don't get bogged down or put too much emphasis on specific scores. The real value of the exercise is thinking about impact.

VISION SCORECARD

Idea or project name + details

THEME	IMPACT SCORE	POSITIVE IMPACTS	NEGATIVE IMPACTS
Activity + Creativity			
Affordability + Accessibility			
Diversity + Friendliness			
Leadership + Volunteerism			
Local Business + Entrepreneurship			
Natural Resources + Landscapes			
Small Town Character			
Strong Institutions + Services			

TOTAL SCORE		Impact Rating Scale	-2 Strong Negative	-1 Slight Negative	0 None or Mixed	1 Slight Positive	2 Strong Positive